

THE MAINE FARMER: AN

importance of the subject, after which the convention adjourned until 2 P.M.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON.

Mr. L. Chamberlain, of the Board, lectured on "Farm Crop."

Grass is the king of crops in the world at large. The hay and grass crop of Maine is worth annually less than \$30 millions of dollars, but still it is apparent that this is a much smaller amount than it should be.

First in importance for the success of the hay crop, is underdraining. We thus save a large amount of heat and ammonia in the ground. Grass stands up and wet better than other crops, but still it thrives better when it is cut than when it is left. The quantity of moisture in the soil is also increased by underdraining, and the admission of the air assists in the decomposition of the mineral and vegetable properties in the ground.

Air must be used to the land for the value we extract in the hay crop. Top dressing must therefore be applied to high lands. Stable manure does not furnish all the elements needed for this, however, as it does not contain all the elements to nourish the grass. The more hay, the more manure, and if you don't make enough to dress your grass lands, then you will need other crops—extensively for a year or two.

Grass seed germinates best at the depth of 1 inch, and great care should be exercised in sowing, as well as in preparing the surface to receive the seed. Many kinds of grasses will not stand the heat of the sun, and each has a variety especially adapted to it. There is very little danger in "over-seeding." Red top is as valuable as timothy or clover. There is no doubt that native grasses will succeed as well as the time honored varieties, if they are given the proper culture.

Many farmers say that they can raise as much grass and clover as their land will allow. Still between the roots there will be found bare spots, which if sown to other grasses will become as verdant as those bearing the above mentioned grasses. A good position for grass is that it has too many stock and a bulbous root. The sun burns the ground between the stumps, and the bulbs have too many enemies and are destroyed.

Orchard grass furnishes good grazing longer than most other grasses, and is well suited to mixed pastures. It is highly recommended by the authority. Both cattle and horses are very fond of it, if cut at the proper season, but if allowed to go to seed before cutting, it is tougher even than the herds grass.

Red top will grow on any land, and support both grass and clover, and is a hardy and luxuriant.

Swamp clover is much better than no clover, being harder, and growing better. Its blossom is of a pink color, a little larger than the ordinary white clover. If sowed it will "fuzz" and lodge, and needs some self-sustaining grass sown with it to keep it from getting out of hand.

Hedger clover grows deeply than any of the grasses and grows well upon dry soil. It is the best manorial plant known to turn into the soil. Clover hay is more nutritious than other, but it is not merely the dry stalks, but the leaves of the hay.

The time of cutting must depend on the state of the grass, and the kind of hay needed. Grass contains all the elements necessary to support the life of vegetable eating animals, and hay, cut at the right time, is the best food for the horse.

The third modifying principle is elevation. There is a certain elevation at which vegetation begins to change, and this varies in the different countries. In England it is 1000 feet above the level of the sea.

The fourth modifying principle is the proximity to distance from mountains, rain fall, etc., and this extends for several miles around, where there is greater rainfall up in a windward than there is up on the leeward side.

The fifth and last modifying principle is the nature of the soil. The climate of a country therefore, depends on the soil, and this varies in the different parts of the same country.

The theory of cutting hay at the time of the "second blossoming" that is going the rounds of the papers, is simply humbug. Grass commences blooming at the bottom of the head, and there is no "second blossoming."

On the first part of June and the first

part of July contains more of the nutritious elements than at any other time, for as soon as the seeds begin to form, the seeds begin to diminish in quantity.

This, then, is the time to cut it. True it "spreads" itself out after the seed is formed, but it is equally true that the grass will last longest, which cuts not like.

As a general thing, grass is cut two weeks late in this State.

There are many methods of curing hay, but there can be but one right one.

We want hay to make milk fat, and to have the best taste, to cut it when it is in the bloom.

Mr. D. H. Thing of Wintrop, said that it is not merely the dry stalks, but the leaves of the hay.

Mr. Putnam of Houston, said he cured his hay as much out of the sun as possible. He advocated early cutting.

Mr. W. W. Witter of Rockland, said that much of the grass seed is destroyed and eaten by the birds. If we now in October, after the birds go south, a much better crop will be harvested. In many parts of our State are not hay in the fall, without sowing some grain. He spoke with the lecturer that hay is generally out late.

Mr. J. V. Putnam of Houston, said he cured his hay as much out of the sun as possible. He advocated early cutting.

Mr. Witter of Rockland, said he cut his hay after the snow had fallen, and hauled it into the barn that night, and laid it loosely upon the scaffold until thoroughly cured, when it was stored.

Mr. D. H. Thing of Mr. Vernon, said he believed in "second blossoming," and explained himself by saying that the grasses which were not harvested, were blossomed out in full. He was opposed to putting hay into the barn green and letting it lie around in the pasture. The lot referred to above was a clay loam, from stones, bushes, &c., and had been plowed and yellow weed.

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The appearance of second blossoming is caused by a "fuzz" over the seed, which was really

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Mr. Webster of ——, inquired if all grasses of one variety blossomed at one time. He thought grass in some parts of a field blossomed sooner than others.

Mr. E. Morris of Winslow, was chosen Secretary pro tem.

The Secretary pro tem reported \$623.85, of the money taken at the Fair in Portland, due the Maine Agricultural Society.

The Treasurer, Mr. Morris of Portland, made his annual report.

The report shows that the gross receipts of the Fair of New England and Maine State were \$22,690,000.

He knew there was not much comfort to be derived from the words of a friend, but he proposed to speak plainly and truly to the members of his party for the people meant to hold them to their pledge and it was in that House alone that the pledges could be fulfilled.

Mr. D. H. Thing of Wintrop, said he had been taught that timely blossomed twice and was certainly such an appearance.

He once nearly destroyed a meadow by cutting the grass early. He had been told by a farmer of experience, that if grass is cut early, it will mature early the next year.

All grass should be cut when they commence to grow, as soon as possible in the season, to secure the crop, at least before the "third blossoming."

He gave some practical advice on curing hay. It should be cured, not burned to death in the sun. The weather proves favorable, hay should stand in the cool shade of trees, and when rolled down to grass it bore so heavy a crop that a mowing machine couldn't run through it. He thought sheep should be pastured on improved land. The lot referred to above was a clay loam, from stones, bushes, &c., and had been plowed and yellow weed.

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AGRICULTURAL AND FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

Poetry.

THREE OLD SAWs.
If the world were kind to you,
Kindness is warm to view
Let their comfort hide from view
Winters that deform it.
Howe'er, the world is not so even,
To that mildness gather, either,
You can no longer gather,
With all the world's weather.

If the world's a witness to me,
God, build honest in it.
Will it help your loneliness,
Or your gladness, or your sorrows,
Raise a hut however slight,
Weed and blemish amidst it,
And make it a home.
Some friends' brother.

If the world's a vale of tears,
Smile till rainbow spans it!
The world's a vale of pleasure,
Of clouds to fan us,
Your gladness gives a gleam
To the world's dark scene,

Ley Larson.

Our Story-Teller.

A HOMELY STORY OF HOME.

BY MRS. REBECCA HARDING DAVIS.

CHAPTER I.

Christmas Eve! John Firth fancied that even the speckles nature about him knew what day it was, and waited for the Babe that was to bring brotherhood to man. The distant mountain peaks, that had faced the sea with the same awful, inexplicable mists, wrapped themselves to-day in soft white mantles, and in them their heads were hidden, as at last some kindly binder to the long-winded riddle of the world. Between them, the little resort town cuddled amply, full of life and heat. The air was alive with children's voices and theinkle of bells; the streets had enchantered the dull shop-fronts into white Gothic towers, glistening with minarets; the shapes themselves, and hence nothing like little Albie Baba caves of jewelry, or sparkling candies, or yellow turkeys waddled about with feathered green crests. The houses, windows, too, were open, and inside were children trooping, people hot and hurried, about them, lighting the fire, and calling for the children would come home. Overhead the setting sun had burned the sky crimson, and at the end of the narrow street one could see the glister of the ice-coast-line, the flag flapping on the fort agains the wind, the great gulf of the sea, with the surf rolling in low, mournful murmur.

People ran against Firth and his wife continually, so great was the hurry of the crowd, calling, "Hello, Firth!" or "Happy Christmas, John!" Everybody was in a holiday mood, and their hands were empty. Their hands were empty. Mrs. Firth looked sourly.

Squire Dunn's carriage as it rolled by filled with a doll in bridal dress and a toy castle; but when she came to her washerwoman's shanty at the corner, her contempt broke into words, for there was Betty with a basket of wash, hanging a bag of marbles and a wicker doll on it.

"It is the very madness of waste!" cried Mrs. Firth. "How many of these poor wreaths know where next week's bread is to come from, I wonder?"

John Firth, who had at last made up his mind, was just thinking, when he saw in the air the one beneficent thought should come to all the world; to the banker at his desk, and the thief in the prison; to poor Betty here in her cabin, as well as to the queen in her palace. "The all are forced to see ends in the year the past," said he.

"What do you mean?" The cold, dry tone somehow reminded Firth that his wife was a member of the church, and he was not.

He answered uneasily. "I meant the white flocks sleep on the hills of Galilee, and the star shining down into the stable, where the child lay, lowering his tone.

"What proof is there that Christ was born on the twenty-fifth of December, John?" in her quietest tones of argument.

"I don't know, Mary," hastily. "We will not say anything more about it."

"Probably that would be better," closing her lead-colored shawl tighter about her spare figure.

"But I thought," hurrying his words out before his wife gave way, "that I would take home some gifts to Bob. To mark the day, you know. Very inexpensive, of course, Mary. That is why I do not object."

"It is as well you consulted me. You seem to have forgotten that the religious education of the children was to be had in the school, and not in the church. He is in charge of the officers and going north for trial. Robert has lived a life you can hardly understand. He is a religious man, and I am afraid he will be lost if he goes to the camp. That would be a great loss to our country. I certainly do object to filling his head with pictures of the stable, or of flocks sleeping, and calling that religion. It is Catholic and heathenish, her high cheek-bones growing hot. They walked on.

"Bob has not been out to day," said Firth, looking wistfully down at the noisy troops of boys with blue noses, and their pockets full of pennies, staring with insatiable eyes in at the shop windows.

"No, no. Let him stay indoors." John Firth lagged behind his wife. Squire Dunn came along beside him, clapping the thin little man on the shoulder, and taking in with a shrewd glance his sunken, dulled eyes and the look of blight on his face. "First, I think we had better have a talk with him. Then we'll go to the shop. Take a holiday, boy. When you see a tree so deep as that, it's the lilt that's coaxing out—mind you, it's true."

"John, I am only a boy. I have only a boy to care for."

"Yes, I am like a soul of a soul leaving a dead body, and there are no dead here!"

"No." His eyes followed her to the steamer, and he made a secret sign to the carman to hasten.

"My son does not expect me."

"I will go to him, and I will go to him on board the steamer at Charlestow, and when I found his strength was so low, came on by rail to take him to him. That is three days ago. The danger may be over."

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"No, no. Let him stay indoors." John Firth lagged behind his wife. Squire Dunn came along beside him, clapping the thin little man on the shoulder, and taking in with a shrewd glance his sunken, dulled eyes and the look of blight on his face. "First, I think we had better have a talk with him. Then we'll go to the shop. Take a holiday, boy. When you see a tree so deep as that, it's the lilt that's coaxing out—mind you, it's true."

"John, I am only a boy. I have only a boy to care for."

"Yes, I am like a soul of a soul leaving a dead body, and there are no dead here!"

"No." His eyes followed her to the steamer, and he made a secret sign to the carman to hasten.

"My son does not expect me."

"I will go to him, and I will go to him on board the steamer at Charlestow, and when I found his strength was so low, came on by rail to take him to him. That is three days ago. The danger may be over."

"What do you mean?" The cold, dry tone somehow reminded Firth that his wife was a member of the church, and he was not.

He answered uneasily. "I meant the white flocks sleep on the hills of Galilee, and the star shining down into the stable, where the child lay, lowering his tone.

"What proof is there that Christ was born on the twenty-fifth of December, John?" in her quietest tones of argument.

"I don't know, Mary," hastily. "We will not say anything more about it."

"Probably that would be better," closing her lead-colored shawl tighter about her spare figure.

"But I thought," hurrying his words out before his wife gave way, "that I would take home some gifts to Bob. To mark the day, you know. Very inexpensive, of course, Mary. That is why I do not object."

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